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The Importance of Establishing Assistance Animal Policies for Your Library

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Keywords: Service animals, assistance animals, therapy animals, emotional support animals, ADA requirements, library policies

Abstract

Many library employees do not understand fully the laws and rules regarding service animals and the rights of persons with disabilities who work with service animals. Employees do not necessarily know the differences between service animals, therapy animals, and emotional support animals. It is important for employees of all public accommodations, such as libraries, to understand the differences and the rules that govern each category of animal, and when and if each category is allowed into the library. Employees need to know how to accommodate persons with disabilities and what questions they can ask legally, if they have reason to believe an animal in the library is not a service animal. It is also important for libraries to develop clear policies regarding animals in the library that adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state rules. Ultimately, there is no easy answer, but employees who know the laws, and libraries that have clear animal policies, are more likely to be successful adhering to the ADA and ensuring equal access for patrons with disabilities. This paper will review the distinction between service animals, therapy animals, and emotional support animals. It will delineate the federal, state, and local regulations that affect academic library animal policy. It will examine how individual academic libraries are currently addressing the issue. The authors also make recommendations on best practices for effectively creating and enforcing such policies. One case study highlights an instance in which university policy is being revised to meet current regulations while simultaneously providing for specific programming involving non-service dogs.

Introduction

Service dogs. Therapy Dogs. Emotional Support Animals (ESA). These terms are frequently used interchangeably, but they have distinct definitions, intentions, and rights. The perceived increased presence of domestic animals in public places compels many libraries either to create a new policy or scrutinize and revise an existing one in order to provide clear guidelines for their users. The intention of such a policy is two-fold: to protect library users' rights and to take advantage of an opportunity to inform their patrons.

All libraries must comply with federal, state, and local regulations when it comes to allowing service animals into their spaces. What exactly is a service animal? What about assistance animals that do not fall under that category? This article investigates the distinction between types of assistance animals, library access that is required by law, and considerations for developing guidelines on animals in the library.



(Pixabay CCO Public Domain, n.d.)



(Reynolds, 2015)



(Rust, 2016a)

Everyone has seen signs such as those displayed above. What do they mean? Some people may wonder, “Is my dog a service animal?”

Perhaps one of these signs below would clarify the rule:



(Rust, 2016b)



(Wise, 2016)

These signs are more informative, but for the signs to be effective, readers need to know specifically what defines a service animal.

Unfortunately, it takes more than a sign for individuals to understand the complex laws and rules governing service animals and access for persons with disabilities.

Types of Assistance Animals

In the recent past service animals, specifically dogs, were easy to identify, as were the disabilities of their handlers. Times have changed, not only among service dogs and their training and abilities, but in the other ways animals are providing assistance to humans, either on a one-on-one basis or in small group settings. While the taxonomy of assistance animals seems to be in a state of flux, the following assistance animal categories are generally accepted: service animals, therapy (visitation) animals, emotional support animals, public or military service animals, and agricultural or sporting animals (Parenti, Foreman, Meade, & Wirth, 2013). This article will focus on those categories most likely to be addressed by academic libraries: service animals, therapy animals, and emotional support animals (ESA). Assistance animal categories are illustrated in Table 1.

ASSISTANCE ANIMALS			
SERVICE ANIMALS		THERAPY ANIMALS	EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS (COMFORT ANIMALS, COMPANION ANIMALS)
DOGS (any breed)	MINIATURE HORSES	Any species (if they meet certification requirements); primarily DOGS	Any species; can include wide variety of types of animals
Allowed in all public spaces (ADA)	Allowed in all public spaces (ADA)	No legal access rights. Depends upon individual institution's policy.	Allowed in commercial airplanes (Air Carrier Access Act) and rental housing (Fair Housing Act)
Certification or documentation not required.	Certification or documentation not required.	Certification from a therapy animal organization is strongly recommended.	Documentation required for airplane flights or housing.

Allowed in grocery stores and restaurants? YES	Allowed in grocery stores and restaurants? YES	Allowed in grocery stores and restaurants? NO (Exception: some outside dining areas)	Allowed in grocery stores and restaurants? NO (Exception: some outside dining areas)
Are allowed anywhere the public is allowed. (They are not considered pets.)	Are allowed anywhere the public is allowed. (They are not considered pets.)	Are considered pets and are not allowed unrestricted access, except while providing therapy in a facility.	Are considered pets and not allowed unrestricted access, but are allowed in housing and on airplanes with appropriate documentation.
Specifically trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities that limit one or more major life activities.	Specifically trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities that limit one or more major life activities. (Trained to the same standards as service dogs.)	Are generally certified by an organization (e.g. Pet Partners, Therapy Dogs International), and make visits to facilities such as hospital, schools, and nursing homes, providing people with therapeutic contact. Must pass several tests to be certified.	No special training is required. Documentation must be from a mental health professional stating the person has a mental health related disability, is under that professionals' care, and that the animal is necessary for the treatment of the person's disability.
Work or task must be directly related to the person's disability.	--Must be housebroken --Must be under the owner's control	Must be housebroken, have current vaccinations, have no history of aggression, have good	Documentation must be from a mental health professional stating the person has a mental health related

--Must be housebroken --Must be under the owner's control	--The facility must be able to accommodate the horse's type, size & weight --The horse's presence must not endanger the safe operation of the facility	obedience skills, friendly interaction with strangers.	disability, is under that professionals' care, and that the animal is necessary for the treatment of the person's disability.
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Note. Table 1 sources are a combination of United States (2010), Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Air Travel (2012), HUD Notice FHEO-2013-01 (2013), and Christensen (2017).

Throughout this article, the term "handler" is used to refer to a person with a disability who uses a service dog. The two of them together (the person and the dog) are referred to as a service dog team.

Regulations: Federal, State, and Local

Equal access for persons with disabilities is addressed in four documents, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act, and the Air Carrier Access Act.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) was revised in 2010 and the revision includes a specific and lengthy definition of what a service animal is. According to the Revised ADA, only dogs (and sometimes miniature horses) can be service animals. The dog must be trained specifically to perform a task or tasks for a person with a disability. The work or task the dog has been trained to perform must be directly related to the person's disability. In order to be covered under the ADA, a person must have an impairment that limits one or more major life activities (such as, but not limited to, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, caring for oneself, sitting, lifting, learning, thinking, working, or performing manual tasks essential to daily life). The impairment must constitute a substantial limitation. Goren (2014) uses the phrase recognition and response to describe the work of a trained service dog.

Only two questions are allowed when determining the status of a service animal: Is this a service dog required because of a disability? What service or task does it perform? It is not allowable to ask handlers the nature of their specific disabilities.

The 2010 ADA standards for accessible design also make it very clear that emotional support animals (ESAs) are not considered service animals. "The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or

tasks for the purposes of this definition” (United States, 2010).

In *Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA*, the U.S. Department of Justice (2015) writes, “The service animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered while in public places unless these devices interfere with the service animal’s work or the person’s disability prevents use of these devices.” It is also worth noting that service animals that are not housebroken, that pose an unreasonable or direct threat to the health and safety of others, and/or that are not under the control of their handler can be removed from the public space. The ADA states that noncompliance of guidelines can be grounds for a request to remove a service animal from a facility. In this case, the handler must be allowed to remain in, or return to, the public place without the service animal.

While the ADA is very explicit about what constitutes a service animal, it includes no requirements for certification or identification of service animals. The intent of this was so that people with disabilities are not subjected to further disadvantage by being required to go through certification or registration processes. Since there is no requirement about who can train the dog, the trainer is not always from an official service dog training facility. People are allowed to train their own dogs or designate others as trainers. Sometimes this is the only way people can get dogs trained to be service dogs, as there are often waiting lists years long at official training facilities. The ADA does not mention how to deal with people who claim their dogs are service dogs when they are simply pets. When the ADA was written, policy makers did not suspect that dog owners would counterfeit disabilities and claim their dogs as service animals in order to be accorded the same access granted those with genuine disabilities and genuine service dogs. Even though it is a convenience for service dogs to wear vests and have identification, this is not required by the ADA. Vests identifying dogs as service animals are readily available online without verification. This renders vests meaningless as a method of confirmation of service animal authenticity. Many states have laws that prevent the use of assistive devices designated for persons with disabilities in order to gain access, but few address the deliberate misrepresentation of pets as service animals. Perhaps it is an issue of misinformation or a lack of education. Some people who have emotional support animals (ESAs) may believe that their dogs qualify as service dogs.

If the only definition of what a service animal is (and is not) was to be found in the ADA, adherence to the requirements would be simple. However, other governmental bodies regulate this topic as well. Besides the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Air Carrier Access Act, the Fair Housing Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 all have something to say about service or assistance animals. While the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 does not specifically mention service animals, it does ensure the rights of students to have reasonable accommodations. Recently, those accommodations frequently have taken the form of service dogs (Berry & Katsiyannis, 2012).

The Fair Housing Act and the Air Carrier Access Act

Under The Fair Housing Act (FHA) an assistance animal can be a service animal or an ESA (also known as a comfort animal or a companion animal). Assistance animals can be any species of animal, as long as they alleviate to some extent the person’s disability, and as long as the animal is not a threat to public safety or public health. Housing entities are required to allow all service animals (as defined in the ADA). They are also obligated to allow ESAs with written medical documentation. The Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (HUD Notice FHEO-2013-01, 2013) explains that for purposes

of housing, comfort animals are considered assistance animals, and are allowed as a reasonable accommodation. If a resident asks for reasonable accommodation of an assistance animal, and the need for the animal is not readily apparent, the housing provider may ask the tenant the same two questions allowable under the ADA. The notice also states that if the request is for an emotional support animal, the housing provider may ask the resident to furnish documentation from a mental health professional indicating that the animal assists with or alleviates an existing disability.

Similar guidelines exist for reasonable accommodation on airplanes under The Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA). Airlines must accept both service dogs and emotional support animals. Service dogs are to be identified by identification cards, harnesses, other written documentation, or a credible explanation from the person with the disability (Podberesky, 2003). However, since the ADA does not require documentation, only the assurance of the person with the dog is acceptable. Again, only the two standard questions are allowed. Whereas the ADA gives access only to service animals, the Air Carrier Access Act does include emotional support animals (ESAs) as well. Unlike service dog handlers, ESA owners can be required to present documentation for their animals. According to *Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in Air Travel* (2012), airlines are not required to allow an ESA unless a passenger traveling with an ESA provides documentation, on letterhead, from a licensed mental health professional currently treating the passenger. This documentation must be less than one year old and must state that the passenger suffers from a disability delineated in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – Fourth Edition (DSM IV), and that the passenger needs the ESA as an accommodation to mitigate the disability. This regulation gives airlines more leeway to require documentation from passengers traveling with ESAs. Airline employees must remember that service dog teams are not required to provide any documentation, other than to answer the two legal questions. Podberesky provides very clear instructions and procedures in the U.S. Department of Transportation guide, *What Airline Employees, Airline Contractors, and Air Travelers with Disabilities Need to Know About Access to Air Travel for Persons with Disabilities*.

The laws and regulations concerning service dogs, therapy dogs, and emotional support animals can be quite confusing and overwhelming. Peter Christensen (2017), president of Columbia River Pet Partners, has provided an explanation of the differences on the organization's website. This easy to understand document, *Service Dogs – Therapy Dogs, Emotional Support Dogs: How they Differ Under U.S. Law*, is available on the website.

Impact of increased access

Rules regarding service animals exist to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to the same places and activities as people without disabilities. Recent years have seen a dramatic increase in people taking their dogs to places where only service dogs are allowed to go. According to Yamamoto, Lopez, and Hart (2015), "Although emotional support animals are not recognized as service animals (assistance dogs) under the U.S. Department of Justice, nor the Food and Agriculture Code in California, many emotional support animals had been registered as service dogs, revealing the limited understanding of the correct definition of assistance dogs" (p. 5).

Recently more dogs have appeared in public places than in the past. This could be a result of more people with disabilities availing themselves of the tasks service dogs can provide. It could also be be-

cause more people want their pets with them, and they do not fully understand the difference between service dogs and pets (which include emotional support animals in places of public accommodation). Wendy Holden (2016), Director of Disability Services at Central Washington University, has noticed an increase in dogs on campus. She observed that often the dogs are not on leashes and this can be a dangerous situation. Since the rise of claims that pets are service animals, several suggestions have been made to eliminate this abuse of the ADA. One suggestion made by Elliott and Hogle (2013), is that the Department of Justice modify the ADA to allow states to require a standardized tag for service dogs. Requirements for this tag would be similar to the need and process for a handicapped-access parking placard. Elliott and Hogle also recommend documentation that the service dog team has completed successfully a public access test administered by a state approved evaluator. This is an option that Holden also believes may be a viable solution.

People often claim there is no harm in taking their non-service dogs with them into public places. This misrepresentation causes harm in several ways. Melissa Mitchell maintains the website, *Service Dogs: A Way of Life*. Mitchell is a woman with a disability who has been part of several service dog teams, and is an advocate for, and speaker about, service dogs. In an article on her website, Mitchell (2008) identifies several ways in which this behavior is detrimental. By representing pets as service dogs, owners are trivializing the disabilities of actual service dog handlers. Handlers and their dogs are in danger of attacks from poorly behaved pets in public, and service dogs acquire negative reputations because of the bad behavior of other dogs. Employees in public places are less willing to accept any dogs and service dog handlers are questioned more often as a result of these misrepresentations.

Another consideration of increased animal presence in public spaces is the parallel likelihood of animals spreading diseases or allergens. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2015) have identified a list of *Diseases That Can Be Spread from Pets to People*. It names 105 diseases that are potentially communicable from animals.

In an interview, service dog handler Michael Mesa (2016) said he is inclined to accept that most service dog teams in public are genuine because of the many unseen disabilities people may have. However, he emphasized that dogs in public should at the very least have basic obedience training and have passed the American Kennel Club (AKC) Good Canine Citizenship course (American Kennel Club, 2017).

Assistance Dogs International (2017) is an accrediting nonprofit organization presenting a coalition of assistance dog programs across the globe. It identifies several minimum criteria for service dogs working in public spaces, focusing on hygiene, behavior, and training.

Programs such as AKC Canine Good Citizen and Assistance Dogs International strive to ensure assistance dogs used in public spaces have a minimum level of good behavior, obedience, and cleanliness. Assistance dogs that have not gone through this level of training and scrutiny potentially pose a risk to the people and animals with whom they come into contact.

Library Policies

Library employees are experiencing an increase in dogs accompanying people into libraries. The own-

ers of these dogs may represent them, implicitly or explicitly, as service dogs. Johnson (2015) expresses, using humor, the real frustration that library employees often feel when encountering dubious service dogs. Many library employees simply do not know what to do or say when they suspect a dog is not a service animal. Sometimes they simply say nothing, or say too much.

Since libraries are places of public accommodation, they are governed by the ADA. Because libraries do not provide transportation or housing, neither the FHA nor the ACAA governs them. Many states also have laws governing assistance or service animals. Michigan State University has compiled a list of such laws for all fifty US states (Wisch, 2016). Libraries may also be governed by local and, in the case of academic libraries, institutional regulations in deciding which assistance animals are allowed on the premises, and under what circumstances. Some academic libraries choose not to establish a policy specific to animal presence, relying instead upon the university's policies. Others, including the libraries at UC San Diego (2017), UC Berkeley (University of California, Berkeley, n.d.), and Dartmouth College (2017) have created guidelines that welcome individuals with service animals (and in some cases, service animal trainees), but do not permit any other animals. The UC Berkeley Library's Animals in the Library policy specifically excludes emotional support animals, noting, "the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purpose of this definition."

Therapy dog programs designed to relieve student stress levels are becoming increasingly popular among academic libraries (Jalongo & McDevitt, 2015). Because therapy dogs do not fall into the service animal category, their presence often requires accommodation within the library's animal policy. Some academic libraries that have therapy dog programs choose simply to include therapy dogs in their definition of service animals. This inclusion is erroneous, and lends to the terminology confusion. Others have created additional guidelines that accommodate exceptions by limiting animals in the library to service animals, service animal trainees, and other animals used for library programming. A good example of this comes from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside (2014), which implemented an institutional Therapy Dogs Visitation Policy. This policy specifically allows therapy dogs that "are trained and certified by qualified handlers who use the dogs for comfort and companion enrichment of others." Including this type of conditional provision for non-service animals in a library's animal policy allows for increased student engagement and community outreach programming without the need for special administrative dispensation.

If a library does not have a policy regarding animals, it is likely to be governed by its state laws. Many public and university libraries do have policies regarding animals in the library. Most of them allow service animals (as defined by the ADA), but not pets. Emotional support animals (comfort animals) are not generally allowed in library policies. Therapy animals are not normally allowed unless they are participating in a specific library activity. The U.S. Department of Justice (2011), published a convenient single page explanation of the revised ADA requirements for service animals. The Department of Justice encourages distribution of this document. Most library policies parallel the ADA guidelines or follow specific state laws (that also parallel ADA guidelines). Some libraries specifically mention their no pets policy in their Library Code of Conduct. Some specifically state that it is against the library's code of conduct to misrepresent a pet as a service animal, and that could be grounds for suspension of library privileges (Saratoga Springs Public Library, n.d.). Some libraries not only post their policy on

their website, but also include information about laws regarding service animals from the U.S. Department of Justice (Dartmouth College, 2017). It is important that library employees (especially front line employees) are familiar with their library's animal policy. The library's policy must adhere to the ADA, and employees may only ask those two questions: Is this a service dog required because of a disability? What task or service has it been trained to perform? It is never appropriate for employees to ask the nature of the person's disability. If the person replies that the dog is a comfort animal or offers emotional support or keeps the person calm, then the dog is not a service animal and can be excluded from the library. It is a difficult task for a library employee to tell patrons that their comfort animals are not service animals and must leave the library. This is why it is important for all library staff to be trained in the proper way to deal with patrons who bring animals into the library (Marrall, 2016). A preset script might be a good idea. That way, all library employees ask the same questions and give the same information. Patrons with service dogs may be questioned several times per day, and do not want to spend any more time on this than is absolutely necessary. An even better solution might be for the library to designate one employee who is very familiar with laws and library policy regarding service animals, as the person who asks the questions. This option is recommended by Mesa (2016). If staff members encounter a situation where a team may not include a trained service dog, they should notify the designated employee to speak with the handler. This ensures someone will not challenge the handler on every floor, or in every department, of the library.

Many times library employees are hesitant to question handlers about their dogs. If a person with a disability is denied equal access to public accommodation, the maximum fine for the first offense is \$75,000.00 (U.S. Department of Justice. Civil Rights Division, 2014). How do library employees even know when it is appropriate to ask (or refer to someone who will ask) those two questions? If it is obvious that the dog is a service animal, questions are not appropriate. If it is not obvious that a dog is a service animal, the library employee may ask the two questions. Keagen Grace is a writer and professional working dog trainer. She often writes articles for Anything Pawsable, a service dog advocacy website. Grace (2015b) provides a list of behaviors that will indicate whether the dog is likely or not to be a service animal. The behaviors on the list are clues, and not guarantees of whether the dog is a service animal. However, the behaviors described should give employees an idea of what to look for in a service animal. If the dog demonstrates the negative behaviors on the list, it may be appropriate to ask the questions, or refer to the designee.

If a dog is disruptive or misbehaves, even if it is a service dog, library employees can ask the handler to remove the dog from the library. The handler must be allowed to return to the library without the dog (U.S. Department of Justice. Civil Rights Division, 2011).

A service dog handler visiting the library wants to be treated like any other patron – to have the same access to facilities and services as do the other patrons. A list of ten things service dog handlers want people to know (Grace, 2015a), is available on the Anything Pawsable website. Unless there is reason to believe the dog is not a service animal, staff members should not question the handler.

A clearly worded sign, placed prominently near the entrance of the library, may also help clarify the policy to those patrons considering entering the library with non-service animals.

As previously mentioned, there may be times when non-service dogs are welcomed into the library. The library may choose to provide therapy dog programs. These programs are governed by guidelines and policies.

Case Study: CWU Brooks Library Paws and Relax

The James E. Brooks Library is located on the campus of Central Washington University, in Ellensburg, Washington. The library serves approximately 11,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The library follows university policies, and does not have its own policy specific to animals on the premises.

Brooks Library is currently making a concerted effort to provide methods for students to de-stress just prior to and during their quarterly final exams. In Fall 2014, we started the process of establishing Paws and Relax, a program designed to allow students to interact with dogs during their finals week studying. For liability reasons, and to ensure a threshold level of behavior screening and dog handler knowledge, we restricted participating dogs to those who were certified therapy dogs, dogs and handlers from the local 4H program, and dogs who had passed the AKC Canine Good Citizen certification. As we developed a full roster of participating dogs, we worked with the campus risk management representative to ensure liability concerns were addressed, and that all related campus policies were being followed. It was during our conversations with the representative that we became aware of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) specific to our university, that states, “No animals, including dogs and cats, except service dogs, will be allowed, under any circumstances, in any university-operated building” ([WAC 106-124-801](#)). We discovered this regulation only weeks from the date we planned to launch our program. Working with the administrative staff in the President’s office, we secured a dispensation, allowing us to hold our planned event. Our efforts shed a light on this outdated WAC and brought awareness to the President’s office of the need for revision in order to be in compliance with both the ADA (allowing both types of ADA recognized service animals, dogs and miniature horses) and the Fair Housing Act (i.e., allowing students with identified mental health related disabilities that require an emotional support animal (ESA) to live in campus housing with their ESA). As a consequence, our administration is currently working to bring this particular WAC into compliance with federal regulations regarding animals in university buildings.

The popularity of this program has greatly exceeded our expectations. Not only does the library administration heartily support Paws and Relax, the campus administration also encourages its continued finals week presence. When one student was asked why he attended the therapy dog session, he replied, “Whenever you pet a dog, you feel a lot better.”

“It’s just calming,” added another student. “It’s a good way to take your mind off of all the stress of having to study for that final tomorrow or later this afternoon. It’s a nice way to come and relax and not really have to worry about anything” (Central Minute, 2016).

In order to quantify the effect therapy dog interactions had on student stress, we developed two charts, “before” and “after,” with a scale of 1 (no stress) to 5 (high stress). We invited participants to indicate their stress level before visiting the dogs, and again when they were exiting the therapy dog activity. The results confirmed that interaction with the therapy dogs substantially reduced the amount of stress

for participating students (Figure 1), with an average 47% reduction in stress.

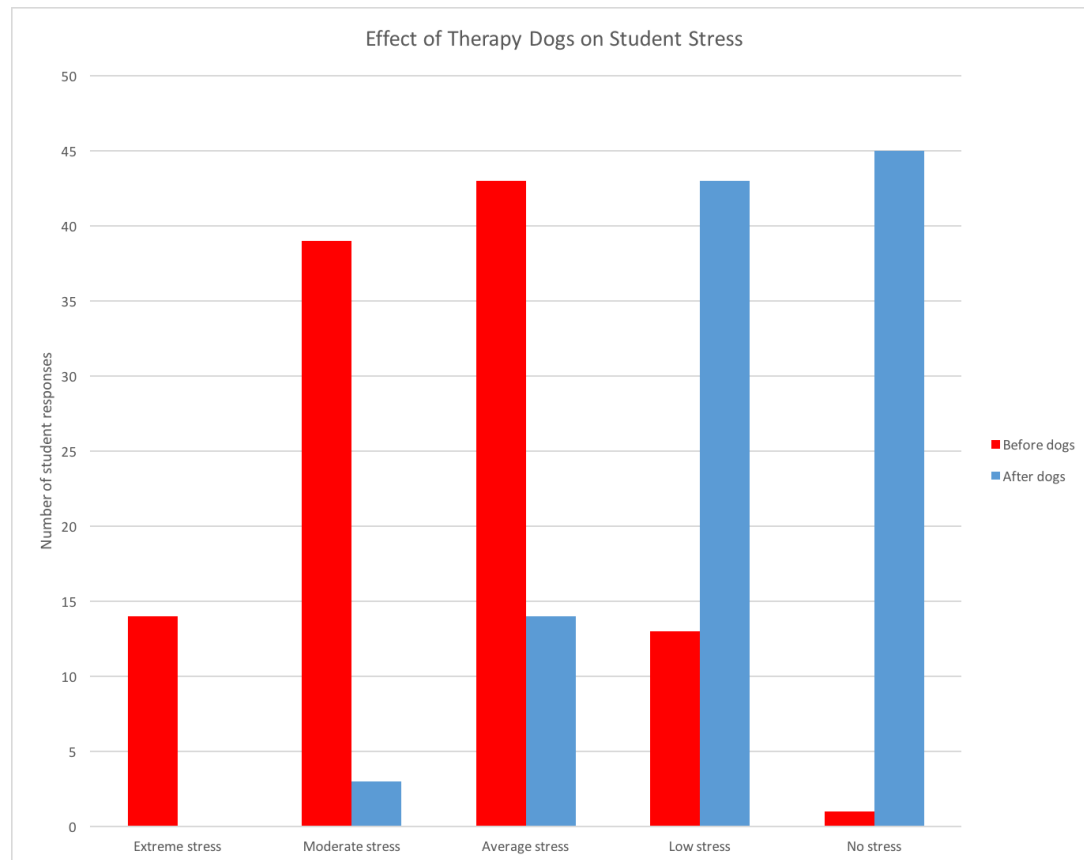


Figure 1: Rust (2017)

We also used this event as an opportunity to educate our students on the differences between types of assistance animals, and provided this info-graphic at the entrance to the event (Figure 2).

The affirmation that this popular program significantly benefits participating students, and the ability to use the event to educate students regarding types of assistance animals, reinforces the position that it is a worthwhile endeavor to modify university policy to allow therapy dogs into the library.

Figure 2.

WHAT KIND OF DOG IS THAT?

	Therapy Animal	Emotional Support Animal	Service Animal
Provides assistance to individuals with disabilities	⊘	⊘	✓
Provides comfort to individuals with a diagnosed mental health related disability	⊘	✓	⊘
Provides emotional support to groups	✓	⊘	⊘
Allowed in all public spaces	⊘	⊘	✓
Allowed in public spaces only in specific situations (such as Paws and Relax)	✓	⊘	⊘
Allowed in residential buildings and passenger airplanes	⊘	✓	✓
Training required	Recommended	⊘	✓
Certification/Documentation required	Recommended	✓	⊘

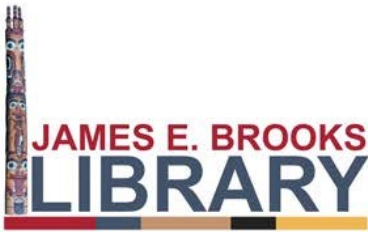


Figure 2: Taylor (2016)



Conclusion

Most libraries will either have their own “animals in the library” policy, or will enforce a similar policy set forth by the host institution, the city, the county, or the state. Either way, it is imperative that the policy being followed is in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations, in terms of patrons with disabilities. The policy followed should also be an accurate reflection of allowable animal presence within the library. Because of the sensitive nature of interactions regarding patrons with animals, it is strongly suggested that all library staff are trained on the animal policy. Providing staff with a script of what to say to the patron, and appointing one staff member to field the majority of animal issues within the library, will serve to minimize patron discomfort, and maximize staff confidence.

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